

From: Jeff Krukin
To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Clear DayI am delighted that US District Judge Motz rejected Microsoft's offer to donate pc's and software to schools as part of its settlement. This plays right into Microsoft's hands, allowing them to extend their Windows monopoly to one of the few markets not yet controlled by Microsoft.

I work in the Information Technology sector and have used Microsoft products for almost twenty years. I've used Windows from the days of its 16-bit, Version 2.0 incarnation. While the product has steadily improved in function and reliability, it still is not rock solid. Windows XP, the latest version, has significant security flaws. For both businesses and individuals alike, every version of Windows has been a constant source of problems and frustration. In industries where companies face competition, their products do not survive for so long because another company soon provides a superior product. Consider the American and Japanese auto industries. Windows survives because of Microsoft's incredible power to coerce pc manufacturers to pre-install Windows on every pc they sell. This creates very difficult obstacles for any competitive pc operating system.

Windows should be considered an infrastructure commodity, much like gasoline, electricity, or the telephone dial-tone. Consumers can choose from many vendors when they purchase gasoline, but the function provided is always the same and it's a stable product. Not so with Windows. The vendors of electricity and dial-tone create and sell their products within semi-regulated markets, which provides some level of consumer protection (how much is a long debate for another time) while providing a stable product. Not so with Windows. Gasoline, electricity, and dial-tone support an economy by allowing many products created by many companies to use the same vital infrastructure. The gasoline infrastructure is stabilized by competition and the electricity and dial-tone infrastructures are stabilized by regulation, thus providing a solid foundation for the diversity of products requiring these infrastructures. Not with Windows. Microsoft is not regulated like the electric and phone utilities, nor is it faced with competition in the desktop operating system market. Thus we have a jittery product in Windows.

I do not wish to see Microsoft regulated like a utility, yet Windows must become a commodity. The Dept. of Justice settlement should force Microsoft to make Windows source code freely available so other software vendors can improve and sell Windows.

Thank you.

Jeff Krukin
"Let us dare to read, think, speak, and write."

-- John Adams

"It is not necessary to change. Survival is not mandatory."

-- W. Edwards Deming